

Analyzing the Impact of Service Quality of the Premier League's Streaming Platform in China

Wenshuo Jin^{1, †}, Yuxiang Lin^{2, *, †}

¹Qingdao Galaxy International School, Qingdao, 266041, China

²Olive Tree International Academy, BFSU, Hangzhou, 310000, China

*Corresponding author. Email: 15020240136@xs.hnit.edu.cn

[†]These authors contributed equally

Abstract. With the rapid development of the Internet era and the wide application of social platforms. People are increasingly willing to use streaming media platforms for information exchange. The streaming platform is defended as a combination of playing video and user communication. The streaming platform provides an opportunity for Chinese viewers to watch the English Premier League (EPL). The purpose of this study was to analyze the impact of service quality of the EPL's streaming platform in China affects Consumers' willingness to spend. This paper used qualitative analysis and SWOT analysis to investigate the impact of service quality on consuming intention of EPL's Streaming Platform in China. This research concluded that service quality will positively affect consumption intentions. Thus, EPL could develop the Chinese market by improving its streaming platform's service quality. Finally, a more detailed dialectical analysis will be elaborated at the end of the paper.

Keywords: Streaming Media, Premier League, SWOT Analysis.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The development of live streaming of the EPL in the Chinese region started in 2007. Since 2007, when Tian sheng bought the broadcast rights of the EPL for the 2007-2010 season for \$50 million, Chinese viewers can officially watch the EPL matches on Internet self-publishing platforms [1]. Over the next 15 years, several companies signed up for the Chinese broadcast rights of the EPL, including Sina, New England Sports, PPTV, LeTV, Tencent, and others [1]. Each platform broadcasts in much the same way, using a live video stream plus chat interaction to create a good viewing experience for viewers. Tencent Sports is a mobile app for sports video, which mainly provides users with live, on-demand, and information video services for football, basketball, tennis, golf, and other events.

China is a developing market, and because of the rapid growth of mobile devices, there is still a lot of legacy device usage. Because of the simple entertainment output, users are far more dependent on video than in other countries. It is possible that in the diversified development of the future, the usage rate of certain streaming media terminals will decline, and the frequency of use will decrease. And the arrival of the epidemic has forced more people to choose to watch the game on streaming platforms.

The EPL is one of the top football competitions in the world. The EPL is the most watched sports league in the world, broadcasting to 643 million homes in 212 territories and a potential television audience of 4.7 billion [2].

1.2 Research Gap

Although there are many studies on streaming media, the emergence of the epidemic has led to a high improvement in the development of streaming media compared with before. The emergence of the epidemic caused people to be unable to gather in many numbers, which also made the number of users of streaming media significantly increase compared with the previous. Moreover, with the development of streaming platform technology, the population watching sports events has largely

shifted from TV to online subscription platforms. According to earlier research, well-funded companies are entering the market for broadcast rights and transforming how live sports are watched and shared on TV, computers, gaming consoles, tablets, and smartphones [3]. In order to continue the logic of television coverage and viewing behaviors while straying from the bounds of broadcast media, live sports broadcasts are a crucial tool. The global market for sports broadcasting rights and the media networks that distribute live content have undergone a historic change as a result of their entry.

After conducting a series of studies, a question was raised: What influences the willingness of viewers to watch matches online? In an environment where more and more people are choosing to watch games online, it is important for the EPL, as a highly commercialized league, to attract more viewers. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the service quality of streaming platforms affects viewers' willingness to watch.

1.3 Fill The Gap

This research will review the research conducted on the impact of the viewing experience and quality of service on viewers' willingness to consume EPL matches on streaming media platforms. The paper hypothesized that the more the services offered by streaming platforms meet the needs of consumers, the higher the consumers' willingness to consume. To verify whether the hypothesis is correct, this paper will examine the service quality of streaming platforms by consulting previous studies as well as by qualitative analysis and analyzing it with SWOT analysis, finally proving whether the quality of service of the streaming platform affects the viewers' willingness to consume.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition

In the content discussed in this article, some terminology will be involved. To facilitate people reading this article to better understand the content of this article, some terms will be explained in this section.

Interactivity will alter with communication technology, communication environment, and people's perspectives [4]. It is both a media and a psychological aspect. In several interactivity-related domains, including information science, computer science, human-computer interaction, communications, and industrial design, there is no consensus on what the term "interactivity" means, however, the majority of definitions relate to user-user interaction. Interactivity has varying definitions in various contexts, making it difficult to define [5]. Interactivity can be defined as the extent to which communication technologies can create a mediated environment in which participants can communicate one-to-one, one-to-many, and in large numbers, both synchronously and asynchronously, and participate in interactive information exchange. For human users, it also refers to the ability of users to perceive experiences as simulations of interpersonal communication and to increase their awareness of the telephone [6].

Another important term is the quality of service. In 1983, Lewis, RC, and Booms, BH found that service quality (SQ) is a comparison of the perceived expectation (E) of a service with perceived performance (P), leading to the equation $SQ = EP$ [7]. If the quality of the service a company provides does not meet consumer expectations, then consumers will be disappointed and thus less likely to spend money in the future. A systematic study of service quality was reported by Grönroos in 1984 [8]. Grönroos proposes that service quality is considered to have two basic dimensions, namely technical quality, and functional quality [8]. According to Grönroos' definition, technical quality is the result the customer obtains through interaction with the service company, while functional quality is how the customer receives the service and the expressiveness of the service delivery [8]. On this basis, the customer's expectations of a particular service depend on factors such as recommendations, personal needs, and past experiences. Sometimes there can be a gap between what is anticipated and what is provided. The service that customers "experience" and the service that they "expect" are

frequently compared by customers. A gap will appear if the experience does not match the expectation [9].

2.2 Important Results

In the research on interactivity, a variety of perspectives have emerged. The main views are divided into three levels, namely not interactive, Reactive, and Interactive. Non-interactive refers to interaction when a message is not related to a previous message. Reactive refers to when a message is related to only one previous message. Interactive, on the other hand, is when a message is related to many previous messages and the relationships between them. In addition, interaction can also be reflected in human-human interaction and human-machine interaction. An elementary form of interaction is human communication. Human engagement is a two-way conversation. The sociologists' term "interaction," which is defined as the act of at least two people exchanging or interacting with one another, is linked to and descended from the term "interactivity." A message level that reacts to an earlier message is necessary. A communication system's capacity to "speak back" is sometimes referred to as interaction [10]. Human-machine interaction is another instance of interaction. For instance, a streaming platform's interactivity is determined by how the user interacts with the user interface, not by how the pages are designed, how well videos can be played, or how much data can be downloaded [10]. This covers how users discover matches, how they view live streams and videos on the platform, and how they interact with other users. Good interactivity increases users' willingness to consume and use as well as their likelihood to stick around. Interactivity has the potential to affect viewers' intentions and behavior. Numerous academics have made this point in the past [10]. Through their analysis of these two media, the writers have concluded that interactivity is a hotly debated subject. The author concludes that when new media emerge, other mass communication principles will need to be modified and reified. The identification of the factors that influence service quality is a topic of significant dispute for business scholars and managers, according to Professor Robert Johnston. Look at if some quality factors lead to major satisfaction while others lead to major unhappiness [10].

Another study's key finding was also showed the similar results. Attentiveness, responsiveness, care, and friendliness were the key drivers of satisfaction. Completeness, dependability, responsiveness, usability, and functionality are the areas where there is dissatisfaction. Since responsiveness frequently leads to satisfaction and frequently leads to discontent, it is seen as a crucial predictor of quality [11]. It is demonstrated that, in contrast to previous research, the reasons for dissatisfaction are not always related to the reasons for satisfaction. Furthermore, reliability is primarily a source of dissatisfaction rather than satisfaction [11].

The goal of Festus Olorunniwo and Maxwell K. Hsu's study is to define the kind of service and operationalize the scales for measuring it to determine the structure of service quality (SQ) and how it relates to customer satisfaction (SAT) and behavioral intents (BI). In light of this, they conclude that SQ, SAT, and BI, as well as their interactions, may be typologically particular [11]. As a result, similar relationship features between two or more industries that fall under the same service category may be seen in these structures [11]. This information can serve as a baseline for industry-wide best practices, improving consumer satisfaction and behavioral intent [12].

2.3 Summary

Overall, these studies highlight the need for people that use streaming media. Streaming media provides a platform for people to watch live broadcasts and videos all the time. Streaming media can greatly reduce the pressure on the memory of the device by watching it online. At present, a large number of people choose to use the platform of streaming media, which also promotes the development of streaming media platforms. Therefore, this paper believe that the emergence of streaming media platforms makes people's life more convenient, and also enables the development of new industries.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

In this thesis, a qualitative analysis of the EPL will be conducted using the SWOT approach. The reason for using this approach in this paper is that qualitative analysis can capture the main features of things and draw constructive conclusions in the absence of data support [12]. SWOT analysis is used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to conduct an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of ourselves and position the competitive advantages before formulating development strategies [13]. The subject of this study is the impact of streaming platforms on the quality of service of the EPL on consumers' willingness to watch. For this topic, it is difficult to use data to objectively show the quality of service and viewers' willingness to consume, so a qualitative research method is more appropriate. A qualitative approach was used in Brendan O'Hallarn's study of the Curt Schilling case, and the results were very effective [14].

3.2 Premier League

The EPL, historically known as the First Division of Football, is the premier professional football league operated by the English Football Association. One of the "Big Five" European football leagues is the EPL. It is managed by the Super League and has 20 teams [15]. The bottom three teams are demoted to the English Champions League at the end of the season [15]. One of the top leagues in the world for a very long time is the EPL. It is a quick-moving, competitive sport with many powerful teams. It is also the highest-paid football league in the world and the one with the most commercial success.

English football clubs had to pay more for elite players as a result of the weakening pound. Theresa May's British government's efforts to restrict immigration pose a greater financial threat to the EPL than Brexit itself [14]. The EPL boasts the most lucrative broadcast contracts in Europe as a result of the massive global audiences of Manchester United, Chelsea, and several other heavyweights [14]. With over 65% of its roster made up of international players, the EPL leads all other European leagues in this regard. When the current £8 billion is \$10.5 billion [14]. The broadcast agreement is re-signed, it will be less if the EPL's European stars decide to leave England following Brexit. EU athletes are permitted to join teams in the British Isles without limitation according to the EU's free movement policy. Players from other areas must meet many requirements for elite players, such as age and cap requirements, to participate. The EPL is pushing for an open system where each club can have up to 25 first-team players, with at least eight homegrown players, to be approved by the British government [15].

3.3 SWOT Analysis

3.3.1 Strength

The EPL attracts a large number of spectators from China because of the intensity of the matches in the EPL. Compared to several other mainstream European leagues, such as the La Liga in Spain, Serie A in Italy, Ligue 1 in France, as well as the local Chinese Super League, the pace and intensity of the rivalry in the EPL are much higher than in other leagues, and there are many superstars from all over the world among the teams participating in the EPL, which also attracts a large number of Chinese viewers. Such an intense competition naturally leads to interaction between viewers. Viewers can send messages and interact with other viewers on social media or streaming platforms. This feature makes the EPL attractive to viewers and affects the willingness of viewers to interact. Take the third-round match of the 2022-2023 EPL season between Manchester United and Brentford on August 14, 2022, for example, in which Manchester United lost to Brentford by four to zero [16]. After the match, the result was hotly debated by the Chinese fans on the online interactive platform "DongQiuDi", with 11,186 viewers commenting on the match, of which the comment with the highest number of likes received 25,910 likes [16]. The result was retweeted by 3,575 viewers [16]. This proves that the intensity of the EPL matches largely influences the viewers' willingness to interact.

3.3.2 Weakness

Although the EPL can attract a large audience, the operation of the streaming platform in China is dependent on other Chinese companies. The EPL buys the league's broadcasting rights from Chinese internet companies, giving these companies the right to broadcast the EPL. As a result, the EPL does not have active control over the quality of service on the streaming platforms, leading directly to uncertainty. Most of the services offered on streaming platforms in China are live streaming channels, user communication platforms and communities, information about matches, and information about league schedules, standings, etc. However, the quality of the services provided by most platforms is not guaranteed.

3.3.3 Opportunity

At present, streaming media are generalized rapidly, so there has a large number of short video platforms. On August 27, the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) released the 48th Statistical Report on the Development of the Internet in China [17]. The number of Internet users in China reached 1.011 billion as of June 2021, according to the report. The number of online video users including short videos reached 944 million, increased by 17.07 million from December 2020, accounting for 93.4% of the total Internet users [17]. Among them, the number of short video users was 888 million, an increase of 14.4 million from December 2020, accounting for 87.8% of all Internet users [17]. That means in China there has a huge market for streaming media. And also, it is a good choice to market mode attract more people that browse the short video platform. If keen people on football browse the short video platform, then they will know about the EPL which can increase the views number. The short video platform has data analysis technology that can push the short video to the audience interested.

3.3.4 Threaten

Premier League football did not establish a broadcasting platform of its own when streaming media developed. The high cost of broadcasting the EPL has prevented many people from watching it online. For example, there are a lot of EPL fans in China. Because of COVID-19, Chinese fans cannot go to the scene to watch football games. Then they choose to watch the matches online. When they choose to watch the game online, they need to watch it on other broadcasting platforms. Because the EPL is the strongest league in football, its broadcasting fees are very high. Other leagues have their exclusive broadcast platforms that fans can watch. EPL is broadcast on other platforms at the same time as many leagues. This would result in the rest of the league on the platform some of the fans of EPL will be carved up.

4. Results & Discussion

Overall, the EPL has many advantages over other soccer leagues. Firstly, the intensity of the games in the EPL and the attractiveness of the teams to the fans bring a lot of attention to the EPL. Secondly, in the era of rapid development of streaming platforms in China, a large number of potential EPL viewers can be attracted, and the EPL has a large potential market in China. Nevertheless, there are still some weaknesses in the EPL, for example, the EPL does not have an independent streaming platform to broadcast matches in China, which leads to the uncertainty of viewers' consumption intention as the quality of service provided to them when watching matches is not guaranteed.

EPL has a large number of fans and great attraction, which is the biggest advantage of EPL. Given the rapidly increasing number of Internet users in China, EPL can gain a lot of benefits from China's streaming media platforms. However, according to SWOT analysis, EPL also has some areas that can be improved, such as establishing its own exclusive independent streaming media platform and improving the service quality of the streaming media platform. Choose the right time to broadcast the game in order to attract more viewers.

For the better development of the EPL streaming platform in China, this paper makes the following suggestions. First, the EPL should build its operating streaming platform in China, with the EPL

officially broadcasting the matches and providing professional Chinese commentaries during the matches, a chat platform for fans to freely communicate, and information about the matches, such as the lineups of both sides of the matches, past encounter records, and the latest news about the participating teams. Through these means, the interactivity between consumers and consumers and between consumers and the streaming platform can be improved. Secondly, comprehensive team news and league news are provided during the period when there is no game, and fans can speak and communicate freely under the board related to their favorite teams.

5. Conclusion

This paper studies the broadcast quality of EPL in China on the premise of the rapid development of streaming media platforms. From the EPL broadcast viewing number and EPL is currently facing problems and difficulties to study. To explore whether the quality of EPL broadcast in China affects the number of people watching it. By analyzing the quality of EPL broadcasts on streaming platforms and the number of viewers in China. It was concluded that EPL did not have a streaming platform of its own and that streaming platforms that could show EPL would have to pay a high price to carry it. The problem has resulted in a few platforms where EPL can be watched in China. The transmission is not very high and cannot achieve a good promotion.

Applying the SWOT analysis method, this paper analyzes the internal strengths and weaknesses of EPL, as well as the external opportunities and threats. Through the research, it is found that the service quality provided by EPL's streaming media platform is positively correlated with consumers' consumption intention. There has been no systematic study on this topic before. This paper puts forward suggestions for the development of EPL streaming media platforms in China based on previous studies on service quality and consumption intention. However, this article has some drawbacks. This paper only adopts the research method of a case study, which lacks the support of data. In future research, more data-oriented analysis of EPL's streaming media platform in China can be conducted.

References

- [1] Wang Liu. The broadcasting rights of English Premier League matches have developed in China, [J] Contemporary Sports Technology, 2016 (4):158-160
- [2] Ebner, S. History and time are key to the power of football, says Premier League chief. The Times. August 31, 2022, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/history-and-time-are-key-to-power-of-football-says-premier-league-chief-3d3zf5kb35m>
- [3] Hutchins, B., Li, B., & Rowe, D. Over-the-top sport: Live Streaming Services, changing coverage rights markets and the growth of Media Sport Portals, [J] Media, Culture & Society, 2019 41(7), 975-994.
- [4] Stromer-Galley, Jennifer. "Interactivity-as-Product and Interactivity-as-Process," [J] The Information Society. 2004 (5): 391–394.
- [5] Yuping Liu; L J Shrum. What Is Interactivity and Is It Always Such a Good Thing? [J]. Journal of Advertising, 2002 (4): 53
- [6] Kioussis, S. Interactivity: A concept explication, [J]. New Media & Society, 2002 (3):355-383.
- [7] Lewis, R.C. Booms, B.H., 1983. The marketing aspects of service quality, [J]. Emerging perspectives on services marketing, 1983 65(4):99-107.
- [8] Grönroos, C., "Scandinavian Management and the Nordic School of Services-Contributions to Service Management and Quality," [J]. International Journal of Service Industry Management, 1984 (3):17-26.
- [9] Parasuraman, A., Berry, L.L., Zeithaml, V. A., "Understanding Customer Expectations of Service," [J]. Sloan Management Review, 1991 (3):39.
- [10] Jensen, J. F., Interactivity: Tracking a New Concept in Media and Communication Studies, [J]. Nordicom Review, 1998 (12).

- [11] Robert Johnston, The determinants of service quality: satisfiers and dissatisfiers | Emerald Insight. 1 December 1995. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/09564239510101536/full/html?fullSc=1>
- [12] Smith, T. Qualitative analysis. Investopedia. September 1, 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/q/qualitativeanalysis.asp>
- [13] Kunbin Zheng. Discussion on Application of SWOT and SMART -- Taking CMMI OPP (Organizational Process Performance) as an Example (Part 2), [J]. Computer Science & Technology, 2010 (153).
- [14] O'Halloran, B., Shapiro, S. L., Hambrick, M. E., Wittkower, D., Ridinger, L., & Morehead, C. A. Sport, Twitter hashtags, and the public sphere: A qualitative test of the phenomenon through a Curt Schilling case study, [J]. Journal of Sport Management, 2018 32(4): 389-400.
- [15] David Hellier, Brexit has rocked the pound, but the Premier League's problems don't end there. September 13, 2017, <http://www.lanxionsports.com/posts/view/id/7567.html>
- [16] Manchester United 0-4 Brentford, DongQiudi. September 1, 2022, <https://m.dongqiudi.com/article/2925848.html>
- [17] Cai Wenjie, How many million Tiktok users are there? (Tiktok Data Report 2022). February 28, 2022, <https://pinkehao.com/infor/131689.html>